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Carl T. Rowan The Washington Star

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Can Sorensen-to-Turner switch be

explained?

We would know a lot more about our enigmatic leader, Jimmy Carter, if he would tell us what motivations and thought processes lay behind his choice of Ted Sorensen, and now Adm. Stansfield Turner, to head the Central Intelligence Agency.

How does one explain this leap from a liberal intellectual, which was a bold departure from the past, to the more traditional nomination of Turner, who will be the sixth military man to head the CIA?

Is it simply a matter of President Carter getting burned badly with Sorensen and deciding that he'd rather switch back to a safe, traditional nominee than fight the alliance of conservatives, military

leaders and intelligence professionals who sabotaged Sorensen?

The Turner appointment suggests that I was way off base in assuming Mr. Carter chose Sorensen as a way to restore the respect, trust and efficiency the CIA has lost and needs so badly to regain.

I had thought Mr. Carter was saying to the American people and the world: "You can tell by the type of man whom I have appointed that I am serious when I promise that the CIA will not be a threat to the civil liberties of American citizens, at home or abroad, and that under Sorensen the CIA will not wreck the economies or assassinate the leaders of countries which are less than friendly

to the U.S."

But that is not necessarily the signal which is sparked by the appointment of Adm. Turner. People at home and abroad already are saying that under him the CIA probably will dish up more of the same old abuses.

That may be an unfair assumption for many reasons. The White House emphasizes that Adm. Turner is "a military man with a conscience." Fairness requires us to assume that even a man who has spent his adult life in the military can be as much opposed to illegal and reprehensible acts by a governmental agency as is any civilian. Nevertheless, millions of Americans will suffer unease until they hear Turner himself spell out the

policies he will follow regarding "dirty tricks."

Meanwhile, let us ponder the possibility that while the Sorensen and Turner choices appear contradictory, they share one thread of Jimmy Carter's logic. In making both appointments, Mr. Carter may have been looking for nothing more than someone he could trust.

President Carter must be acutely aware of rumblings that the CIA in the past has not been accountable even to U.S. presidents; that on occasion it sabotaged presidential policies; that the CIA covered up important data relating to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and may have been more tied in than we know with the assassin, Lee

Harvey Oswald; that CIA insiders secretly blew the whistle on Richard Nixon and Watergate and his White House taping system so as to drive him out of the presidency.

Obviously Mr. Carter is not so paranoid as to believe all these and even wilder allegations against the CIA. But given the sordid and shocking revelations of the last few years about our intelligence and law enforcement agencies, even the President of the United States may deem caution to be the heart of wisdom.

And whatever else we may think about the Turner appointment, the President is clearly entitled to someone he trusts as the director of central intelligence.